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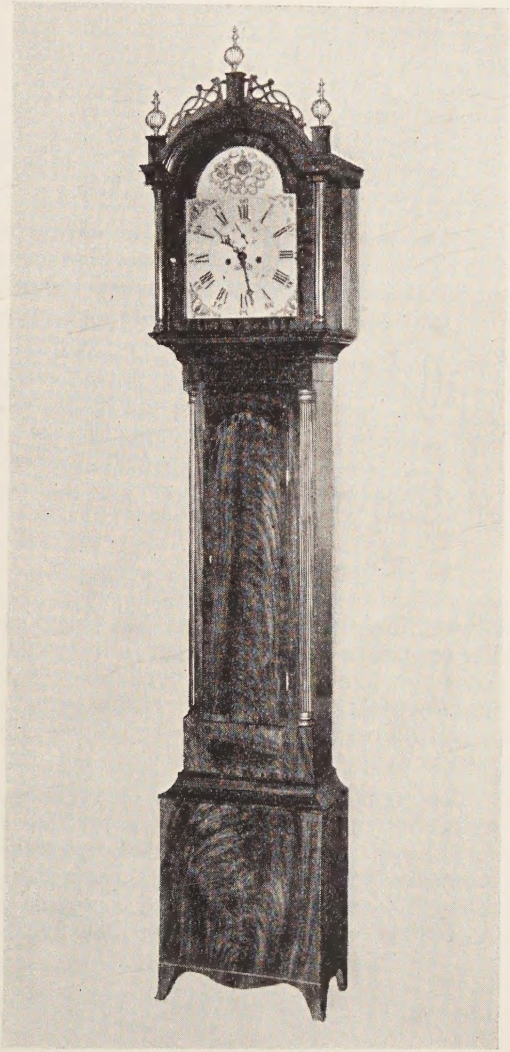

Simeon Jocelin tall clock, c. 1810.

SIMEON JOCELIN CLOCK

In 1940 we received a tall clock from Mrs. Florence Van Fleet Lyman, widow of Moses Lyman, of Longmeadow, Massachusetts. Inside the door is a modern plate bearing the inscription: "Made for Moses Lyman—1790—Works by Eli Terry—Case by Simeon Jocelin."

This clock was recently repaired and the case restored, at which time several interesting things were discovered and observations made which raise doubts as to the authenticity of the Terry-Jocelin claim. The works contain many brass parts that were imported in large quantities about this time by most of the clock makers. The painted dial is inscribed: "Simeon Jocelin, New Haven." The date 1809 is cast into the hinges of the long door and a fragment of a letter was used to seal the ends of the sounding board. This letter was dated "New Haven May 14th 1810".* The clock and works would then seem to have been made in the period we know Jocelin was employed making clocks. Consequently, we feel the works are Jocelin's and not Terry's.

Eli Terry, by 1810, was occupied in Plymouth with the manufacture of cheap wooden clocks. All of his tall clocks that have come to our attention had engraved dials by Daniel Burnap of East Windsor. Terry served part of his apprenticeship between 1786 and 1792 with Burnap.

Simeon Jocelin, clock maker, merchant and maker of watch crystals, was born in New Haven, October 22, 1746 and died June 5, 1823. He was the publisher of a hymnal engraved by Amos Doolittle, and in biographical sketches of his artist son Nathaniel, is spoken of as a talented man and especially skilled in mathematics. *The Connecticut Journal,* New Haven, September 22, 1808, has the following advertisement:

> Silent moving Clock
>
> The Subscriber hereby informs his Customers and others, that he has constructed a striking part to his patent Silent moving Time-keeper, on a new and improved plan; having no wheels above the pinwheel; of course [it] is not materially affected by the cold, bad oil, or dust—gives a full stroke on the bell, with half the usual weight, and is not liable to get out of order.
>
> The Silent moving Time-keeper, on eight year's trial, fully answers expectation: [patented first in 1800] it moves with but little friction, and with a sixth part of the weight requisite on the common principles, viz.—4 ounces for a thirty hour piece—24 ounce weight for an eight day, and 6 pounds for a thirty-two day piece, falling four feet; pendulum ball five pounds. Now in

* Mr. Hewett

Sir I Recd the wood . . . your acquantance shall be glad to let them have it at a fair price

yours as ever

S Haughton

making a number of 6 inch faced Silent moving Time-Keepers, to be soon for sale in elegant short cases (weight falling 6 inches in 8 days) price 45 dollars.

Also, common Eight Day Clocks to be highly finished.

N. B. The Silent moving Clock may be seen, going, at my Shop in State-Street.

Watches repaired as usual, and Trinkets for sale.

SIMEON JOCELIN.

We are not so much interested in Jocelin at this moment, as we are in the maker of this particular case. It is unusually fine and was constructed by a skilled workman. There is reason to believe that this case was purchased from a cabinetmaker. In most instances, cases were ordered by the purchaser although sometimes the clock maker supplied them. If the case was made by Jocelin, he should receive credit as one of our better workers in wood, and we should like proof of it. However, since we have no other record of Jocelin's handiwork, it is strongly suspected that this case was the product of an established cabinetmaker, perhaps working in conjunction with Jocelin.

The dimensions of the case are: height to top of finials, 8 feet; finials, 4½ inches high; width at base of hood, 18½ inches; at feet, 17½ inches. The glass was cracked and when replaced, the original putty, soluble in alcohol, was used.

Four of the pieces used in the cabinet of this clock are each numbered "3" in chalk, so that the assumption is that at the time this cabinet was constructed, the maker was also engaged in building other clock cases. The numbers were placed on the pieces to assure their being used in the right case.

The plinth is in perfect line with the bottom of the door, which is a rare occurrence in clock cases of that time. The French feet show the Sheraton influence and help in assigning a date to the clock. In the fretwork, the pediment is strikingly similar to that of Willard clocks of that era.

It is quite obvious that this cabinetmaker made many such clock cases, and since it is felt this is of Connecticut origin, we are very interested in identifying the maker and learning of other work which he did. This maker had a big shop, with a large number of tools. The highly selected mahogany used in the case is indicative of easy means for picking out choice pieces.

The design follows classical lines. The two columns on the hood are extremely well done. The eight-reeded corner column cannot be improved upon, even with today's tools. The instrument for this work was so divided as to produce thirty-two reeds in 360 degrees.

Owners of tall clocks of the period around 1810 please compare this picture with theirs and send any deductions to us, for which we would be grateful. Perhaps Mr. Haughton's letter to Mr. Hewett is the clue to the whole problem.

NEWS OF THE SOCIETY

Miss A. Elizabeth Chase, Docent of the Yale University Art Gallery, gave a delightful illustrated lecture at the April meeting on "Early Connecticut Arts and Crafts". Miss Chase used many illustrations, examples of which are in our museum.

"The Founding of Wesleyan University" was the subject of a talk by Professor George M. Dutcher at the May meeting. Professor Dutcher, a Vice-President of this Society and Professor of History at Wesleyan, presented a condensed version of many years' research on the subject. There was a good attendance, and from the lively discussion that followed the talk, it was obviously of considerable interest to those present.

At the Annual Meeting, held on May 21, the customary reports were read and slate of officers presented. James Brewster, State Librarian, and Thompson R. Harlow were elected to the Library Committee. The other officers were reelected for the ensuing year.

Examples of the artistry of Jared Bradley Flagg, 1820-1899, and George Whiting Flagg, 1816-1897, sons of Henry Collins and Martha (Whiting) Flagg of New Haven are now hanging in the Museum Room and, after many months of bare walls, brighten the room tremendously.

The Society operates on an annual budget of about $9500. This includes salaries and all necessary expenses of maintaining a library and museum. From this it is obvious that our resources are extremely limited. Returning after twenty-eight months absence, I was immediately struck with the tremendous number of repairs urgently needed. With close association, I had become used to dilapidated furniture, flaking portraits and documents in fragile condition. It has occurred to me that some of our members might be interested in contributing funds toward repairing, restoration or preservation of some of our objects. The following are a few examples of what can be done with little money:

$1 will buy a mat for a print or map

$3 will bind a book or buy a print box

$10 will preserve a document, letter, map or broadside

$25 will clean a portrait, a print or a clock

$100 will preserve the oldest Connecticut Infantry color in existance, or will reline an oil portrait

$200 will restore a tall clock made by Jacob Sargeant in Hartford about 1795.

$800 will restore a set of eight Wyllys chairs. These include two originals and six Connecticut made copies of an early date. The Wyllys chairs are probably the most unusual set in any museum.

$1000 will prepare a calendar of the Wadsworth collection of papers, one of the largest in the Library, or would provide editorial work necessary to produce a volume of Vital Records

I can not think of a better way to contribute to the preservation of our past. In so doing, the donor's generosity becomes a permanent record

of our Society. Federal tax laws allow an individual a deduction up to 15% of his adjusted gross income for gifts to educational institutions. The higher the tax bracket, the lower the net cost of such a contribution.

At any time the Librarian is prepared to suggest specific ways in which funds may be expended to fulfill particular hobbies, family connections, or other interests of prospective donors. In succeeding issues of the *Bulletin,* additional items needing attention will be described.

A CONTRACT FOR A HOUSE

As these lines are written, Congress is debating subsidies for housing, ceilings on old houses and the question of pre-fabrication. To many of us, the cost and specifications for construction are very real problems, perhaps a bit too real in today's economic whirlpool. The following documents, one a signed contract, the other specifications for the construction of houses, concern Berlin, Connecticut. They give a remarkable comparison between costs of almost a hundred years ago and those prevailing today. Lucy Kelsey, daughter of Stephen and Hannah (Hart) Kelsey, was born in 1800 or 1802 and died unmarried September 21, 1855.

This agreement entered into between Benjamin Wilcox on the one part and Lucy Kelsey on the other part witnefseth that for the consideration of Twelve Hundred and Twenty one dollars to be paid as hereinafter specified the said Wilcox is to Build a house for the said Mifs Kelsey and furnish materials for the same as follows. Said House to be 30 ft wide and 40 ft long two stories high with a wood house on the rear 10 ft wide and 30 ft long reaching the width of the main house The timber for said main house as follows. Cills 6 x 7 end Beams 6 x 7 middle 4 x 8. Garret Beams 6 x 6 Plates 6 x 6. Purloin Plates 5 x 6 Girts 5 x 5. Posts 4 x 8. and 19 ft 6 in from top of Cill to the top of the Plates Rafters 2 x 5 Joice for first and second floors 2 x 7 Garret 2 x 6 Outside studs 2 x 4 Partition 2 x 3 Braces 3 x 4. The first floor to be laid of 1¼ in spruce the second floor of 1 in spruce. the garret floor to be laid of Hemlock Boards except where Mifs Kelsey may wish in the front end to finish a room of which she is to be at the extra expence should she have it done. The frame for the wood house to be of propper sized timber for the same. The house and wood house to be covered with Clear Clapboards except under the wood house of which shall be sided up with hemlock boards on the main house. The main house roof to be covered with No 1 sawed Pine shingle. The wood house to be covered with the same or tinned and in case it is tinned said Mifs Kelsey is to pay ten dollars extra for it. There is to be a Partition length ways of said house in the first and second stories. The lower story is to be divided into a Parlour Ketchen Bedroom and sink room each side of the centre Partition. there is to be a suitable number of shelves in each sink room to answer for a Pantry. There is to be two Cupboards in each sink room one under each sink and one under each lower shelve There is to be one fireplace

and oven in each Ketchen all attached to one Chimney *there being but one in said house* There is to be 4 Cupboards one in each parlour and one in each ketchen in such places as can best be calculated about said Chimney. There is to be a suitable Mantel in each Parlour. The Chambers to be divided into three rooms and a space from the top of the stairs to the Garret doors. There is to be an entrance from one back Chamber to the other which will take two doors. There is to be eight Clothes Prefses in said house three each side of the centre partition in the Chambers and one in each Bed room below. whatever the said Mifs Kelsey may have done in the garret above the floor she is to be at the extra expence. The side outside doors in said house are to be 1½ in thick with two Pannels in the lower part of each and glafs in the upper part. There is no front doors in said house. All of the inside doors are to be 1¼ in thick with 4 Pannels in each except the Closset and Cupboard doors. The Closset doors are to be 1⅛ thick with 4 Pannels in each the cupboard doors are to be suitable for the Cupboards. The Clofset doors are to be 2 ft wide and 6 ft 6 in long the other inside doors are to [be] 2 ft 6 in wide and 6 ft 6 in long the outside doors are to be 2 ft 8 in wide and 6 ft 8 in high there is to be one door leading from each sink room out into the wood house. one end of said wood house is to be left open the other to have a batten door. There is to be one gangway door and steps for four doors. There are to be 28 windows in said house, with 12 lights in each. and 9 x 12 glafs and all of a good quality American glafs Together with 4 cellar windows with 3 lights in each. There are to be three in each Parlour 2 in each ketchen 1 in each Bedroom and one in each sink room 3 in each front Chamber 1 in each middle Chamber and 2 in each back Chamber one in each end of the garret the sash all to be 1¼ in thick. The doors are to be trimmed with Blakes Handles and latches. except the Closset doors which are to have Catches together with the Cupboard doors the back doors leading under the woodhouse are to have bolts and the side outside doors are to have locks. The windows are to [be] furnished with springs. There are to be 10 stove tubes in said house to accommodate the rooms for stoves. There is to be 15½ rods of Banister fence with 2 small gates and one large one of common ordinary height & one double outhouse. and one well Curb. The house on the outside is to be Painted with three coats of white lead Paint together with the outside of the woodhouse with the exception of the roofs all of the joiners work in the first and second stories above the floors to be Painted with three coats of white or some other plain colour as Mifs Kelsey may direct. The fence and out house and well curb to be Painted with two coats of paint not to exceed in expence of white. The Proprietor is to furnish Pumps and pipes for the same and the contractor is to put them up. Whatever has been omitted in this specification The contractor is to be at the trouble of having done and the proprietor is to pay the bills. The Joiner and mason work to be done in a workmanlike manner————The said Kelsey is to pay for the said House as follows Two Hundred dollars when the frame is raised, Three Hundred more when the house is Covered. Four Hundred more when the House is Plastered Three Hundred and Twenty one when said house is finished.

All of which payments shall be promptly Paid at the time the house shall be so far advanced as to demand them.

in witnefs whereof we hereunto scribe our names this 17th day of December 1850 in presence of Timothy A. Wooster

[Signed] Benjamin Wilcox
Lucy Kelsey

Specifications for a house

Dimensions

Front 30 wide 40 ft long from front to rear with a wood house 11 ft by 30 on the rear of the house

Height

Posts 19 ft 6 in from the top of cill to the top of plate the lower story to be 8 ft the 2^{d} 7 ft 6 in betwixt timbers

Timber

Cills 6 x 7 Posts 4 x 8 End beams in first story 6 x 7 middle 4 x 8 Upper Beams 6 x 6 Girts 5 x 6. Plates 6 x 6. Joice for first & second floors 2 x 7 Garret 2 x 6 Rafters 2 x 5 Outside studs 2 x 4 Partition studs 2 x 3. suitable frame for Wood house the House and wood house to be covered with Clear Clapboards and No 1 sawed Pine shingles. the house not sheathed previous to Clapboarding

Floors

The first floor to be laid of 1¼ in spruce the 2^{d} of 1 in spruce the garret of hemlock except where Mifs Kelsey wishes to Plaster a room for which she is to be at the extra expence the house to be divided with a partition through the center in each story in the lower story there is to be a Parlour, Ketchen, Bedroom, and sink room. The sink room and Buttry are in one room the sink to be closed up there are to be a sink in each half of the house the proprietor is to furnish Pumps and pipes for the same and the contractor is to put them up. The Chambers are to be divided into three each side of centre partition with a space in each part leading to Garret door There are to be eight Clothes prefses three in each half above and one in each Bedroom below there is to be one fire place and oven in each half of said house below and only one chimney in said house Mifs Kelsey is to be at the extra expense of such rooms in the garret as she may wish

Windows

There are to be three windows in each Parlour 2 in front and one on the side one sash door to light the spaces 2 in each Ketchen one in each Bed room and one in each sink room. 3 in each front chamber 2 in front, and one on the side of the house one in each middle Chamber 2

in each back Chamber one on the side and one on the end of the house, two in the garret one in each end of the house 4 cellar windows. all of good American glafs and 1¼ in sash. the glafs to be 9 x 12 throughout the house and twelve in each except the cellar which shall be three lights.

Doors

The whole of the doors in said house to be 1¼ in thick and 4 Pannels in each there is to be a Batten door out of the north end of the wood house there is to be one gang way door and 4 steps one for each outside and one for each door under the wood house The house to be similar to the one now owned by Mifs Kelsey and Occupied by Samuel Stanley and Ralph Webb both outside and in with the exception of some little alteration in the Chambers, or 2^{d} story

Painting

the whole house to be Painted outside and in with three coats with the exception of such rooms as Mifs Kelsey may wish of some other

colour the whole of white lead. There is to be 15½ rods of Banister Fence of common ordinary height with 2 small gates and one large one all Painted with white lead

Door trimmings

The doors are all to be trimmed with Blakes handles and latches. there is to be a bolt on each back door and a lock on each side door. There are no front doors the entrance being on the sides of the house.

Benjamin Wilcox on the first part agrees and obligates himself to build a house as within specified and furnish materials for the same together with said fence as within specified for the sum of Eleven hundred and ninetyeight dollars and fifty cents. to be paid as follows. two hundred when the frame is raised two hundred as soon as the house is enclosed four hundred as soon as the house is plastered. three hundred and ninety eight dollars and fifty cents as soon as the house is completed. and Lucy Kelsey agrees and obligates herself to pay the said Wilcox the sum of eleven hundred and ninety eight dollars and fifty cents at such time or times as said house shall be so far advanced as to demand the said Payments agreeable to this specification and article of agreement

The price of these Bulletins is ten cents each.